

U.S. Department of Justice
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Western District of New York

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PRESS RELEASE

May 10, 2004

RE: UNITED STATES v. BRETT BIGELOW

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle announced today that on May 10, 2004, Brett Bigelow, age 30, of Boston, New York, pled guilty before the Honorable William M. Skretny, United States District Court Judge, to violations of federal law, specifically a two-count Information charging (1) the use of an interstate communication facility to extort money from an individual through the use of threats to injure a person, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 875(b), which carries a maximum sentence of imprisonment of twenty years; and (2) use and carrying of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c), which carries a minimum term of imprisonment of at least five years and up to life. Sentencing is presently scheduled for October 28, 2004 before Judge Skretny at 9:00 a.m.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy C. Lynch, who handled the prosecution of the case, stated that during the evening hours of September 18, 2003, Brett Bigelow kidnaped Abdul Almontaser. Brett Bigelow thereafter held Almontaser against his will into the morning hours of September 19, 2003, while at the same time using a telephone to communicate

ransom demands to Sameer Taher in exchange for the safe return of Almontaser. During the course of and in relation to the kidnaping and extortion, a Remington shotgun was used and carried.

Brett Bigelow's guilty pleas were the culmination of an investigation on the part of Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Career Criminal Task Force, the City of Lackawanna Police Department, the Town of Hamburg Police Department and the Buffalo Police Department.

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